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# THE PROBLEM OF JAPANESE EMIGRATION

AUTHOR(S):

Ono, Kazuichiro

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# THE PROBLEM OF JAPANESE EMIGRATION

By Kazuichiro ONO\*

## I. Tendency in the Problem of Emigration and Its Intrinsic Nature

The problem of international emigration assumed a new aspect after the first World War. The third convention of the Comintern in 1921, pointed it out in the following vein :

“Emigration of laborers and farmers to vast continents across the oceans has always served a safety valve for the capitalistic system in Europe. Emigration assumed added proportions at a time of continued stagnation and after the collapse of a revolutionary movement. At the present moment, however, both America and Australia have come to set up increasing barriers against immigrants, which means that emigration, as a safety valve, is blocked.”

The tendency for a diminution of international emigration, however, had been in evidence already between the closing years of the 19th century and the initial years of the 20th, when modern imperialism was steadily in the making. Between 1880's and 1914, when the first World War broke out, Canada and America, Australia and South Africa, in rapid succession, either banned or restricted immigration from China, Japan and India. The trend for banning or restricting the yellow-skinned immigrants gained an added momentum especially after the first World War, and the tendency gradually spread to European immigrants, especially from south and east European countries, who, thus, were barred from entering the New Continent, hitherto the greatest reservoir for foreign immigrants. The number of European immigrants during the 1905-1930 period averaged about 1,500,000 persons a year, which, in the 1921-30 period, decreased to less than 600,000, and to even about 140,000 during 1931-38.<sup>1)</sup>

What caused such a vast reduction in the number of immigrants as well as strict restriction imposed on their settling? Probably two causes may be cited : (1) capitalism had entered into the stage of monopolistic capitalism with symptoms of stagnancy and decline ; economic panics had assumed global pro-

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\* Assistant Professor of Economics at Kyoto University

(1) J. Isaac ; “International Migration and European Population Trends,” *International Labour Review*, Sept., 1952, p. 188.

portions, while chronic business depression had become the order of the day in most capitalistic countries, with the consequence that areas to absorb a vast army of immigrants had ceased to exist. This, of course, does not mean that all the areas on earth had been tapped and explored; it only means that, with the completion of a colonial division by imperialistic countries and the upsurge of a strife among them for a re-division of their colonies, competition among them for a monopolistic control of the colonial regions had intensified, entailing economic destitution on the part of laborers and farmers, with the inevitable result that the very foundations of the capitalistic structure were endangered. These circumstances, combined, worked to block the formation of new markets and exploitation of untapped resources, as had been seen in America; (2) the flow of immigrants was apt to bring pressure to bear upon the labor market of the country in this stage, where the perpetual existence of the unemployed was increasing, and the consequent competition caused among the labor hands unavoidably pressured their wage level, especially the native laborers'.

This brought about a resentment and antagonism of the native laborers against not only immigrants but also the ruling class who had admitted immigrants into the country. And, this led to a more intensification of the class struggles that had been being intensified in this imperialistic stage.

Thus, the ruling classes in the immigrant-receiving countries, which had been benefiting from their flow in the form of the reduction of the wage level and rise in land prices, were gradually compelled, in the face of such situation, to place an increasing emphasis on the national consciousness as a means to avert an awakening of a class consciousness, and, in the course of such policy, alien immigrants, especially the yellow peoples, had to be singled out as a target of restriction, and, even prohibition, for the reasons, among others, that they were considered detrimental to the growth of such nationalistic sentiments while emphasis on the consciousness of a homogeneous race (i. e. White) was upheld as the primary essential factor for its growth. Such, however, was fully utilised by the ruling classes for veiling their intended domination of the subordinate classes. It was exactly on these grounds that, in Canada, Australia and South Africa, restriction or shutting-out of yellow-colored emigrants was first proposed for the ostensible reasons of their being hardly amenable to native social institutions. In the case, specifically, of Japanese settlers, these countries evidently were apprehensive of imperialistic inroads, of which the Japanese immigrants were considered to be harbingers. Seen in this light, it was simply a means made necessary for the maintenance of American and British imperialism in a state of stable dominancy. An overall international crisis, then steadily coming to the fore, acted to aggravate such tendency.

As the immigrants were curtailed under forcible measures of restriction,

however, it became evident that the issue of immigration posed a most urgent problem for Western capitalists. Chronic unemployment on a major scale and the existence of surplus population, foreshadowing an imminent economic crisis, had inevitably to draw serious attention of the capitalistic countries. Even though it was admitted that emigration was never the sole means of solving the problem of surplus population, it was simply undeniable that it, after all, offered a provisional expedient so long as the capitalistic institution was to continue. To keep a "window" open for emigration, further, would be to keep a hope for the unemployed and semi-unemployed elements that the problem of over-population was not without a possibility of eventual solution, and thus, prevent their class consciousness from erupting into a violent outburst.

The decision to set up an emigration committee following the inauguration of the I. L. O. (International Labor Organization) in 1919 after the end of the first World War, was a manifestation of the consciousness that world capitalism faced a crisis. A sharp conflict of interests among the emigration and immigration countries, however, obstructed a smooth and satisfactory development, while the I. L. O. failed to take even a step forward in the situation. The conference on immigration, held in Rome, 1925, under the initiative of Italy, failed to achieve anything.

The issue of emigration again came to the fore in Europe following the close of the second World War, under the pressure of a surplus population on the European Continent, and, for a second time, the I. L. O. found itself charged with the task of finding a way out. The urgency of the issue was evident because opportunities for immigrants had in the meantime been materially curtailed in many countries, where more stringent measures of control had to be taken. In the face of this, the necessity of international collaboration was felt more keenly than after the first World War. The consciousness of a crisis facing the world capitalistic mechanism prompted the I. L. O. in 1948, to formulate a Manpower Programme as a measure for the realization of perfect employment, and, as a means for that purpose, to convene a preparatory conference on emigration in Geneva, between April and May 1950, when it was proposed that the O.E.E.C. (Organization of European Economic Cooperation) initiated under American leadership, be asked to extend financial aid for the furtherance of the programme, while in October, 1951, an International Emigration Conference was held in Naples, when the I. L. O. took the initiative to propose an ambitious plan to systematically emigrate a total of 1,700,000 Europeans during the coming five years.<sup>2)</sup>

While it need not be reiterated that the political, economic as well as

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(2) I.L.O.; "The I.L.O. and Migration Problem" *International Labour Review*, Feb., 1952.

strategic importance of Europe relative to America brought the surplus population there into limelight in connection with the projected solution of the issue of international migration, such move will at once besepak the impending crisis facing the system of the world domination by Western Imperialistic countries under the hegemony of the United States. The principle of "priority for European immigrants" is unmistakeably in evidence here. It was ironical, however, that the I.L.O's Proposal at the Naples parley was not adopted, because it evidently conflicted with American interests.<sup>3)</sup> The Belgian government, then, under an American initiative, moved to convoke an international talk in migrants, which, being held at Brussels in November, 1951, saw a resolution on a Provisional Intergovernmental Committee on the Movement of Migrants from Europe adopted. On the basis of the resolution, the Provisional Committee got underway the following year. Financed by \$ 50,000 annually donated by each of the 26 member countries (60% of the entire expenses being borne by the United States) and various other monetary donations, the Committee has been subsidizing the countries concerned in transporting their respective migrants, the number of emigrants thus thus aided amounting to number of emigrants thus aided amounting to about 300,000 persons by 1955. While it may not be denied that such effort for international cooperation amounted to a contribution, though small, to the worldwide migration policy, it has nevertheless brought no change whatsoever in the decrease in the actual number of people migrating, as has already been alluded to.

Japan offers no exception to the above statement. In her case, the problem of emigration was relegated to the background for several years following her defeat in war. With the coming into effect of her peace treaty and her subsequent return to world economy, however, the problem again came up to the fore, and, ever since 1953, increasingly louder voices have been raised for its solution. It is interesting to note that the tendency coincided with the increase in her potential surplus population in farming districts and a similar increase in the chronical surplus population in urban areas, made inevitable in the course of the progress of multitude of contradictions inherent in Japan's economy. In short, the issue of emigration became a target of attention in Japan as her unemployment began to assume alarming proportions. While the problem was first taken up as an issue in December, 1952, a total of 22,000 persons migrated under government subsidy during the period between 1953 and 1957, while those sailing with private funds during the same period numbered 4,000, most of them migrating to Central and South American countries, mostly to Brazil.

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(3) *Ibid.*

Table 1. Migrants under Government Subsidy

| <div>Years<br/>Countries</div> | 1952 | 1953  | 1954  | 1955  | 1956  | 1957  | total  |
|--------------------------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Brazil                         | 54   | 1,480 | 3,524 | 2,659 | 4,370 | 5,172 | 17,259 |
| Paraguay                       | —    | 18    | 208   | 647   | 1,074 | 1,507 | 3,454  |
| Argentina                      | —    | —     | 2     | 117   | 23    | 57    | 199    |
| Dominica                       | —    | —     | —     | —     | 565   | 299   | 864    |
| Bolivia                        | —    | —     | 7     | 87    | 3     | 377   | 474    |
| Venezuela                      | —    | —     | —     | 3     | 6     | 23    | 32     |
| Colombia                       | —    | —     | —     | —     | 2     | 3     | 5      |
| Mexico                         | —    | —     | —     | 1     | 4     | 1     | 6      |
| Chile                          | —    | —     | —     | —     | 3     | —     | 3      |
| America                        | —    | —     | —     | —     | 118   | —     | 118    |
| Total                          | 54   | 1,498 | 3,741 | 3,514 | 6,168 | 7,439 | 22,414 |

Table 2. Migrants with Private Funds

| <div>Years<br/>Countries</div> | 1952 | 1953 | 1954 | 1955  | 1956 | 1957 | total |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|
| Brazil                         | 84   | 381  | 678  | 1,471 | 682  | 442  | 3,738 |
| Paraguay                       | —    | —    | —    | —     | 4    | —    | 4     |
| Argentina                      | 47   | 13   | 23   | 46    | 37   | 43   | 209   |
| Dominica                       | —    | —    | —    | —     | 5    | —    | 5     |
| Bolivia                        | 3    | —    | 5    | 3     | 1    | 6    | 18    |
| Venezuela                      | 2    | —    | —    | —     | 5    | 3    | 10    |
| Colombia                       | —    | 4    | —    | 13    | 5    | 6    | 28    |
| Mexico                         | 8    | —    | 2    | 9     | 22   | 29   | 70    |
| Peru                           | —    | 1    | —    | —     | 5    | 89   | 95    |
| Total                          | 144  | 399  | 708  | 1,542 | 766  | 618  | 4,177 |

It shall be noted that the total number of emigrants registered during these six years was nearly equivalent to an annual average of government-sponsored migrants to Brazil during the pre-war years 1932-34, when Japanese migration to that country was already on a decrease.

After the World War II, the issue of migration in Japan has undergone a qualitative metamorphosis in the same way as in Europe. This does not confine itself to a decrease in the number of migrants; it, in essence, is characterized by the circumstance that the question is taken up as a factor for the sustenance of the organism of world hegemony enjoyed by American capitalism. The fact has earlier been pointed out in connection with the issue of European migrants, where the leading role of America is more obvious than

elsewhere, while it may be predicted that the steady decrease in the number of migrants as well as the increasingly stringent measures of control against the immigrants foreshadowed the inefficacy of such new approach to the problem.

A clarification of the situation, as pertaining to Japan, will be attempted with a brief retrospect into the past history of Japanese migration.

## **II. Process of Development of Japanese Migration** **—Its Characteristic Features and Changes**

It may be safely stated that a full-fledged Japanese migration was started with the sending of the so-called government-contract emigrants to Hawaii in 1885. The move was preceded by an aggravation of the domestic situation involving an acute pauperisation of her farming population and lower-graded laborers following the adoption in 1881 of a deflationary economic policy by the then Finance Minister Prince Masayoshi Matsukata, which entailed a sharp drop in commodity prices and industrial inactivity as well as the consolidation of the semi-feudalistic land ownership aided by a dwindling popular clamor for civil rights.

After 1884, more and more Japanese began to migrate, the tendency becoming even more apparent after the economic crisis of 1890. By 1894, no less than 27,000 Japanese had sailed to Hawaii. There was another main stream of migration during the period—it was sailing to Korea, and this was significant as foreshadowing the future course of Japanese migration, at a time when her modern industrial capitalism was still in the making. With the formulation of the Migration Protection Law in 1896 after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 (not intended for protecting migrants but for supervising migration companies, this Law, with a few minor revisions, still remains in force), the economic crises of 1897 and 1900-1 and the promulgation of the Public Peace Policing Law in 1900, as a turning point, Japanese migration showed a substantial increase by several times as compared with what it had been prior to the Sino-Japanese War. The Japanese settlers, during this period and up to the imposition of restrictive measures following the conclusion of the Japanese-American gentleman's agreement and the Japanese-Canadian Pact in 1907 (the reasons for which have been explained earlier) sailed to such points, mostly, lying on a line extending from Hawaii.<sup>4)</sup>

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(4) The anti-Japanese immigrant moves in America and Canada were afoot as early as 1887. After the sending of the government contract migrants was suspended in June, 1894, the contract migrants was suspended in June, 1894, the business was placed in the hands of private interests, with no positive measures being adopted up to the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5, probably because the Japanese government, in view of violent anti-Japanese moves



After the first World War, the migration eastward from Japan swung to the Central and South America, especially Brazil. Following the Japanese-American pact of 1907, the movement against Japanese settlers further intensified; Japanese were denied land ownership (1913), and were placed under serious restrictions regarding the acquisition of citizenship, and, in 1924, the Anti-Japanese Immigration Law was passed. This virtually tolled the knell for Japanese immigration. In 1923, the Japanese, as a matter of fact, were banned from entering Canada.<sup>5)</sup>

In sharp contrast to the intensified movement against Japanese migration eastward, increasing numbers of Japanese moved to the Asiatic mainland in the wake of Japanese occupation South Sakhalin (Karafuto), the Kwantung Leased Territory and the leased area along the South Manchuria Railway as a sequel to Japan's victory in the 1904-5 Russo-Japanese War, Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, and the increasing momentum attached to the popular opinion that Japanese migration should be concentrated on Manchuria and Korea.<sup>6)</sup> Japan's migration westward, thus replacing the eastward movement, persisted up to the time of the Pacific War of 1941-45.

Following the "rice riots" (Kome Sodō) of 1918, the reactionary post-war crisis of 1919 and banning of Japanese immigrants in America and Canada, the Japanese government faced the necessity to formulate positive measures on migration, whether directed eastward or westward. South American countries, especially Brazil, were singled out as the most important area for

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in evidence in America, Canada and other areas, was reluctant to further offend their sentiments. Japan, at that time, had specific reasons to shun any occasions to come into conflict with both America and Britain, for she was still under the yoke of the "unequal" treaties concluded with these countries at the hands of the defunct Tokugawa Shogunate, and was wholeheartedly endeavoring for a fundamental revision of these treaties. The same circumstance, again, explains Japan's failure to positively undertake migration to the South-Asia, although such had always been made an issue of.

On the other hand, restriction on Chinese and Korean settlers in Japan started in 1899. Following annexing of Korea in 1910, however, the Korean nationals were exempted from such restrictions.

Special attention should perhaps be paid to the fact that a Kojiro Nishikawa, in the "Shukan Heimin Shimbun" (or Weekly People's Newspaper), No. 44, 1904, voiced opposition to overseas migration on the grounds that such was after all nothing more than shifting laborers to capitalistic exploitation of one country to another.

(5) Japanese emigration to Austrorasia was completely shut out by dint of the Settlers Limitation Law, 1902.

(6) it is interesting to note that in February, 1909, when the afore-mentioned argument was coming to the fore, Dr. Hajime Kawakami (before professing Marxism), in the "Nippon Keizai Shimbun" or Japan's New Economic Review, opposed migration on the grounds that it meant deprivation of national manpower. Dr. Kawakami, criticizing an article on migration by Dr. Susumu Kawazu, printed in the March 3, 1908, issue of the same journal, asserted that migration would not contribute to the progress of national economy and that the ultimate objective of a national economy should consist in the "taking-in" of overseas settlers, but not in the "release" of such migrants.

Japanese settlers. As initial measures to encourage Japanese migration to these countries, the government moved to subsidize the organs charged with the migration business (1921), and, in 1923, decreed that the settlers be exempted from the payment of sailing fees, and, finally, undertook to bear all the expenses of their voyage. In 1926, construction of emigration ships, destined for Brazil, was subsidized by the government. The financial crisis of 1927 found the government more and more energetically concentrating on the encouragement of Japanese migration. In that year, the government decided to set up a settlers training center in Kobe, formulate a law on an overseas emigration cooperative and on-the-spot loaning of funds.

In 1929, when the world was gripped in a global business depression, an Overseas Affairs Ministry was established for streamlining all affairs pertaining to overseas migration, while, as a means to counter economic difficulties faced by farming communities, the government, in 1932, proceeded to not only exempt the intended settlers from paying the sailing expenses but further to pay them special allowances of encouragement. In 1933, another settlers training center was established in Nagasaki for the benefit of the Japanese intending to sail to the South Seas regions for settlement.<sup>7)</sup>

On the other hand, the Japanese government, after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, had an eye on increasing Japanese "farmer emigrants" to newly-acquired colonial territories. First, in 1902, and, then, in 1906, the government sponsored migration of agricultural settlers to Formosa and Saghalin (Karafuto), respectively—emigration to Formosa was suspended in 1910 as it proved to be a failure—while the *Toyō Takushoku Kaisha* (or the Oriental Development Co., Ltd.), in 1902, embarked upon a big-scale agricultural development and immigration of Japanese settlers in Korea. In Manchuria, plans were formulated in 1914 to settle exsoldiers released from local Japanese garrisons. A series of positive measures followed, including the extension of its activities into Manchuria of the *Toyō Takushoku* in 1917, the establishment of the *Toa Kangyo Kaisha* (or the East Asia Agricultural Development Co., Ltd.) under the sponsorship of the Manchuria Railway Company, in 1922, and the inauguration of the *Dairen Noji Kaisha* (or the Dairen Agricultural Co.,

(7) In 1919 following the outbreak of the "rice riots", the Korean Travellers Identification Regulations, although provisionally, were promulgated for the purpose of controlling Korean workers sailing to Japan. The Koreans were banned from coming to Japan between the period immediately after the great earthquake disaster of 1923 and June in the following year. Such ban remained in force after July, 1928, up to the start of the China Incident. According to the 1930 national census, the number of Koreans settling in Japan amounted to 419,009. Following the start of hostilities with Nationalist China; a drastic increase in their number was registered (most of them coming to make up for the deficiency in Japan's manpower), and in 1942, the number stood at no less than 1,200,000 persons. Most of them were forced to engage in heavy manual labor, while their wages, on an average, stood at mere one-half of what was paid to Japanese workers.

Ltd) financed by the South Manchuria Railway Company in 1929. The settling of Japanese farmers in Manchuria was in full swing after the Manchurian Incident, when Japan's Manchuria policy became to occupy a predominantly big momentum as compared with the policy of migration directed against other areas.

In 1922, the Minister of Colonial Affairs worked out a broad outline of plans for agricultural settlement in Manchuria, the program for the first year of which called for the settlement of 100,000 families over a range of ten years. (The plan, later further expanded, proved impractical). The government took a number of measures of encouragement, including subsidies for settling expenses, while, in 1935, the *Manshū Takushoku Kaisha* (or the Manchuria Development Co., Ltd.) was established to see to it that ample farmlands be secured for the Japanese who were enabled to have loans advanced more or less freely. This period witnessed both the Japanese army and officialdom joining their forces in a move to encourage Japanese migration to Manchuria, various plans then worked out including, among others, the ambitious plan formulated by the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, envisaging sending of one million families during the following two decades. In some cases, even plans were advanced for moving whole village communities to Manchuria.

The tendency gained further impetus following a revision of the Brazilian immigration law in 1934, resulting in further restrictions imposed on Japanese immigration. The emphasis placed on migration to Manchuria was eloquently manifested in the fact that, during 1931-37 period, while Japanese emigrants there witnessed an average increase of 100,000 persons per year (although agricultural immigrants, on which the government placed the greatest emphasis, totalled mere 4,000 persons during the 1932-37 period), Japanese immigrants in Brazil, during the same period, numbered mere 20,000 on a yearly average. For particulars, refer to the following table.

Table 3. Number of Japanese Residents in Foreign Countries

|                            | Years          | 1900    | 1913    | 1935      |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|-----------|
|                            | Total          | 161,365 | 755,375 | 2,313,444 |
| Ex-colonial<br>territories | Korea          | 15,829  | 243,729 | 583,417   |
|                            | Karafuto       | —       | 42,538  | 313,115   |
|                            | Formosa        | 37,954  | 133,937 | 269,798   |
|                            | Kwantung Prov. | 3,243   | 47,354  | 157,835   |
|                            | Manchuria      |         | 43,403  | 322,394   |
|                            | China          |         | 16,947  | 56,106    |
|                            | South Seas     | —       | —       | 50,657    |
|                            | Total          | 57,026  | 527,908 | 1,753,322 |

|                    |                |        |         |         |
|--------------------|----------------|--------|---------|---------|
| North<br>America   | Hawaii         | 57,486 | 88,526  | 151,285 |
|                    | U.S. Mainland  | 32,493 | 77,696  | 112,418 |
|                    | Canada         | 2,561  | 12,253  | 20,183  |
|                    | Mexico         | 45     | 2,737   | 5,470   |
|                    | Total          | 92,585 | 181,212 | 289,356 |
| South-east<br>Asia | Philippines    | 167    | 4,894   | 21,468  |
|                    | Australia      | 3,425  | 3,514   | 1,664   |
|                    | Malaya         | 926    | 5,166   | 6,487   |
|                    | Total          | 4,518  | 13,574  | 29,619  |
| South<br>America   | Brazil         | 9      | 11,893  | 192,823 |
|                    | Peru           | 694    | 4,858   | 21,550  |
|                    | Argentina      | —      | 642     | 5,691   |
|                    | Total          | 703    | 17,393  | 220,064 |
|                    | Asiatic Russia | 3,593  | 4,595   | 2,383   |
|                    | Others         | 2,580  | 10,693  | 18,700  |

(Remark) Based on the "Empire's Statistical Yearbook",  
 "Colonial Statistics" and "Table of Japanese Residing in Overseas  
 Areas". The figures do not include Koreans and Formosans.

While it is hoped that the preceding lines have clarified in outlines the past history of migration and migration policy as pursued in Japan, the qualitative features of Japanese overseas settlers will be studied in the lines that follow.

It stands to record that an overwhelming majority of Japanese migrants to Hawaii, the American mainland, Mexico, Canada and Brazil consisted of agricultural settlers, followed by fishermen in numbers. Especially in the case of Brazil, the Japanese sailing there were predominantly farmers. The situation was different in the case of migration to Japan's former colonial territories, for, there, farming and fishing settlers were a mere minority, a predominant percentage being occupied by government officials, industrial and transport workers and businessmen, who settled more in urban districts than in rural areas.

That a majority of Japanese migrants eastward consisted of farmers, with other categories of occupation being seldom seen among these Japanese, was obviously due to the fact that most of them were very inadequately equipped with funds, while at the same time, European settlers, with their control over local industries, presented an impenetrable barrier to the newcomers from Japan. In agriculture, manual labor constituted a major factor of competition, and heavy but cheap labor offered by the Japanese settlers, in spite of various oppressive moves in the lands where they migrated, enabled them to place themselves in a

superior position over the European counterparts, whose standards of living were comparatively higher.

The primary factor which explains the negligible number of agricultural migrants to Japan's old colonies, on the other hand, consisted in the fact that most of migrants, as a matter of fact, immigrated with Japan's imperialistic penetration of and control over these areas, amply backed, as they were, by Japanese State authority and capital, and, in this sense, they were colonisers rather than immigrants. Operation of strong colonial ruling organisations as well as preparation and management of modern industrial, transport, mining and credit mechanisms would be simply unthinkable unless supported by a certain level of education and living standards, and the Japanese settlers, filling these qualifications, naturally, were absorbed predominantly in these organisations and businesses.

Secondly it is noted that Japanese industrial hegemony, thus consolidated with State authority and capital, gradually overwhelmed the native industries, forcing the local populace to take up farming as the sole means of subsistence. Their inferior standards of living and conditions of labor under which they toiled made it out of question for the Japanese to effectively compete with them as agricultural workers. It was only under a strong back-up by the military and economic prowess of Japan, their homeland, that the Japanese agricultural settlers in the colonial territories could either take or buy up lands from the native farmers and force the latter into the status of tenant farmers in the same way as traditional landowners in Japan would. The policy of settling Japanese farmers in the old colonial areas, in spite of its evident failure, continued to be viewed with importance, only because, through them, Japan could take hold of land in these regions at the same time that the agricultural settlements actually meant much in terms of Japan's national defence. And, thus viewed, such policy signified considerably more than as a mere means of alleviating the situation of over-population in Japan proper.

It is obvious that the importance with which settlements of agricultural immigrants in Manchuria were viewed, especially after the Manchuria Incident, emanated from the understanding that they would form a virtual bulwark against a possible Soviet invasion from the north. That these farming settlers, in spite of a very high degree of protection extended them, could not succeed as settlers, however, was entirely due to the persistent resistance offered by the native farmers as well as to the various circumstances described earlier.<sup>8)</sup>

Both of these different categories of emigrants, however, had one thing

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(8) The "Manshu Kiko" (or Travels in Manchuria) by Kensaku Shimaki, (1940) offers a most remarkable reportage on the various difficulties in which Japanese farming immigrants in Manchuria found themselves in these years.

in common, because they, in essence, were both a product of contradictions inherent in the semi-feudalistic capitalism of Japan. A majority of emigrants consisted of destitute farmers who were forced out of their land under the pressure of semi-feudalistic landownership and capitalism affiliated to them, while others belonged to the classes of unemployed or pseudo-unemployed workers similarly conditioned.

The famous prize-winning novel, by Tatsuzo Ishikawa, entitled "Sōbō" (or The People), 1935, dealing with Japanese emigrants to Brazil as its theme, and another by Den Wada, called "Ohinata-mura" (or Ohinata Village), 1939, describing Japanese settlers in Manchuria, vividly delineated how such negative aspects of farming communities in Japan constituted the main motive force compelling the farmers to migrate overseas. The stream of migrants, sent out under the obvious impact of "narrow land and too many people", after all, served to conceal a multitude of contradictory factors infesting Japanese farming communities, and retard the solution of various problems attendant upon them, which, combined, contributed to the maintenance of the hereditarily feudalistic position of landowners, at the same time that they helped make it possible for the Japanese Imperialists to keep up their undisputed sway. And, the avowed "need of migration" was a plausible excuse for justifying Japan's Imperialistic advances on the Continent. Thus, it is known that both of the two different streams of Japanese emigrants, eastward and westward, in spite of their ostensible difference in category and quality, were, essentially identical in that they were both a ring in Japan's comprehensive Imperialistic policy; they were twins born of a womb.<sup>9)</sup>

Another fact which characterises Japan's position vis-a-vis emigration is the meagre number of emigrants sent out. While no definite statistics are available on the number of emigrants sent during the 60-year period between 1868, immediately after the Meiji Restoration, and 1935, it would be safe to assume, in the light of the above-listed table of Japanese residents abroad, that the number stood at around 2,000,000 at a maximum (excluding those born abroad and students enrolled in foreign schools). The Total of actual enigrants number, no doubt, could have amounted more than 2,000,000, because above number only shows residents in that time. Even then, the total figure would be around 3,500,000, an average of 50,000 per year.

The figure is surprisingly low compared, for instance, with 21,000,000 persons, an average of 300,000 per year, migrating from England to America and elsewhere between 1846 and 1924, and, with 17,000,000, an average of

(9) Refer "Teikokushugi" (or Imperialism) by Shusui Kōtoku (1901), as the first clearcut refutation of the ideology which attempts to justify Japan's Imperialistic advance, on the grounds of the "narrowness of Japan's territory and her over-population".

340,000 a year, sent out from Italy during the 50-year period between 1876 and 1926. The figure for Japan is especially significant as indicating the inefficacy of overseas migration as a means to solve the problem of over-population at home, although it is unrefutable that, even with such large numbers of people sent out as emigrants, both Britain and Italy were, as a matter of fact, far from fundamentally solving a similar question facing them, respectively.

The causes for the comparative numerical inferiority of Japanese migrants should be found in the fact that (1) inasmuch as Japan lagged behind the Western powers in organizing itself on a capitalistic pattern, Imperialism had its way when Japan was about to think seriously about the issue of over-population, and, thus, Japanese settlers had to face greater obstacles in their way than European (mostly Italian) immigrants; that (2) Japan's old colonial territories, under the impact of worldwide business depression, were suffering from a chronic over-population and were not in a position to effectively absorb immigrants from Japanese home islands; and that (3) Japan's semi-feudalistic landownership, still found in force in farming districts, worked to impede a clearcut conflict of classes in the rural areas as well as the liberation of farmers from their lands, which, while allowing Japanese emigrants to tend to be mere seekers of money, offered the possibilities for Japan's agricultural communities to become a vast pool for a potential over-population—although such aspects of the situation had to undergo a process of modification, keeping pace with the evolving and deepening of contradictions inherent in the capitalistic system in Japan.<sup>10)</sup>

It is ironical, thus, to note that the very theorization about the need of emigration as worked out through Japan's Imperialistic ambitions proved to be a theoretical ground on which the movement of Japanese emigrants abroad had to be curtailed.

Then, how has the issue of emigration facing Japan changed after the second World War? Japan's defeat in the war resulted in a complete wiping out of Japanese settlers, who, during the past 78 years of migration, had amounted to more than three millions in number, from her old overseas colonies. The door to migration westward was closed. True, following the taking effect of the peace treaty, a small window was opened to Japanese movement to Japanese movement to Central and South America, but its scale, unquestiona-

(10) While it is recorded that 63.4% of Japanese immigrants in Hawaii, during the January, 1885–December, 1895 period definitely settled there, (the percentage would be lower if those sailing on to the American mainland were taken into consideration), their counterparts in Brazil settled down to the percentage of no less than 90.5% (the highest ever recorded throughout the world) during 1908–26. During the 1925–29 period, the percentage further rose to 93.5%.

bly, was considerably smaller. Indicative of the situation was the fact that, in 1946, a new Brazilian legislation intended to ban Japanese immigration, was rejected in the Brazilian parliament by the margin of a single vote!

The decrease in the number of emigrants is not the only circumstance which characterises the present situation, however. What characterises it most strongly is a change in the factors which necessitate it, and this has been amply clarified as a result of an on-the-spot investigation conducted by the present writer and his colleague at the Emigrants Center in Kobe.<sup>11)</sup> This is to say that those sections of the Japanese population which are most prominently under the influence of various contradictory elements resulting from Japan's subservience to America, are migrating. Secondly, the fact is characteristic, again, that America extends assistance, either direct or indirect, to Japanese migration, the fact being unmistakably demonstrated in the establishment of the Japan Overseas Migration Encouragement Company financed with an immigration loan by three American banks (amounting in sum to \$15,000,000.). The American assistance, it is noted, does not end here; it even extends to the good services for enabling those Japanese employees who have been discharged or about to be discharged from U. S. forces to migrate overseas. It is no secret that the diplomatic negotiations conducted by the Japanese government concerning Japanese migration to Central and South America depend for their success or failure on the assistance extendable from the United States.

The case of Okinawa, indeed, indicates most bluntly the extent of American guidance and assistance in this connection. Okinawa has always been an area noted for a large number of emigrants sailing out. It is an established fact that during the post-war years many Okinawans have been deprived of their lands under the military rule of the Americans, who have turned the islands into a strong defence bastion. Presumably in view of this and cognizant of this fact, America has undertaken specific measures of assisting the islanders in migrating to overseas areas. In 1954, when the Okinawa problem was gradually coming to the fore in Japan, America moved to set up in Okinawa a migration financing safe to take charge of loaning sailing expenses and funds needed for settling down as agricultural migrants. To the safe America contributed a sum of \$160,000, while part of \$4,000,000 fund for economic aid earmarked under the Point Four Program, was loaned to Bolivia, the land where the Okinawan settlers are destined to. Viewed in this light, it may well be safe to say that these Okinawan settlers are destined not only to settle the antagonism and resentment of those who lost their land against America, but

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(11) K. Ono, "The Report on the Japanese enigrants for Braril" (in Japanese), 1955, The Research series of the Institute of Economic Research, Kyoto University No. 2.



also to serve as spearheads in the American attempt to establish its undisputed hegemony in under-developed countries.

This fact is highly significant in that it denotes the change of master in post-war years as far as Japan's emigration issue is concerned, for, before the war, Japanese migration policy virtually served to the Japanese Imperialism. A new master has now taken over—a military setup subservient to America and American Militarism itself.

### III. Conclusion.

Small territory and big population—most of the Japanese, indeed, are accustomed to this theme taught into their brains ever since their primary school days. Now, a question arises—is this true? The answer should be negative. Against 5,400,000 *cho-bu* (a *cho-bu* is 2.45 acres) of land now under cultivation, a roughly equal area of land in Japan still remains to be developed. Official investigations reveal that, of the lands already developed, 1,110,000 *cho-bu* suffer from a shortage of irrigation water, 720,000 *cho-bu* needs improvement of irrigation systems, and more than 300,000 *cho-bu* of rice fields need improvement in various aspects. Thus viewed, the adage: “small land and big population” will have to be modified to an admission that large areas of land require expansion and improvement while there is a big army of the unemployed and semi-unemployed. Failure to initiate expansion and improvement of arable lands has entailed an alarming proportion of devastation and curtailment of cultivable areas (the acreage stood at 5,446,000 *cho-bu* in 1952 and at 6,027,000 *cho-bu* back in 1934–36). This, on the other hand, has produced a relative increase in population in surplus.

What is at stake now is never the purely abstract size of either land or population; it obviously is the present status of Japanese capitalistic mechanism, which is so positioned that it must function at the behest of American Militarism. Emigration and all political measures taken therefor, thus, will be reduced to a mere exigency by which its background organisation be protected and maintained, never amounting to anything working for the succor of the migrants themselves or the solution of the problem of poverty on the part of this overpopulated homeland. A definite proof is the past history of Japanese emigration, which, in a word, was a history of tragedy, and this, naturally, will make it self-evident that a real solution of the problem of emigration never lies in mere birth control or execution of an improved policy of emigration.